

We claim:

1. A socket system for coupling a pin of an IC (integrated circuit) device to a contact pad of a circuit board, comprising:

- 5 a zif (zero-insertion-force) opening on a socket that asserts substantially zero force as the pin of the IC device is inserted therein; and
 a compression mount lead on the socket that presses against the contact pad of the circuit board.

10 2. The socket system of claim 1, wherein the pin becomes coupled to the compression mount lead after being inserted into the zif opening.

 3. The socket system of claim 2, further comprising:
 forking leads coupled to the compression mount lead and surrounding the pin within the zif opening; and
15 an actuation plate and an actuation lever that press the forking leads against the pin such that the pin is coupled to the compression mount lead via the forking leads.

 4. The socket system of claim 3, wherein top portions of the forking leads contact a top portion of the pin toward the IC device to minimize an electrical path
20 length between the IC device and the circuit board.

 5. The socket system of claim 1, wherein the compression mount lead is comprised of a pogo spring.

25 6. The socket system of claim 1, wherein the compression mount lead is comprised of a J-bend lead.

 7. The socket system of claim 1, wherein the socket is mounted onto the circuit board such that the compression mount lead presses against the contact pad.

30 8. The socket system of claim 1, wherein substantially zero force is asserted on

the body of the IC device when the pin is coupled to the contact pad.

9. The socket system of claim 1, further comprising:

a back plate mounted to a back-side of the circuit board when the socket is
5 mounted to a front-side of the circuit board.

10. The socket system of claim 1, wherein the socket and the circuit board are part of a test system for testing the IC device.

10 11. The socket system of claim 1, wherein the socket and the circuit board are parts for an OEM (original equipment manufacturer) machine.

12. A socket system for coupling a pin of an IC (integrated circuit) device to a contact pad of a circuit board, comprising:

15 means for asserting substantially zero force on the pin of the IC device as the pin is inserted into a zif (zero-insertion-force) opening on a socket; and
means for coupling the pin of the IC device within the zif opening to the contact pad of the circuit board.

20 13. The socket system of claim 12, further comprising:

means for minimizing an electrical path length between the IC device and the circuit board.

14. The socket system of claim 12, further comprising:

25 means for asserting substantially zero force on the body of the IC device when the pin is coupled to the contact pad.

15. A method for coupling a pin of an IC (integrated circuit) device to a contact pad of a circuit board, including the steps of:

30 asserting substantially zero force on the pin as the pin of the IC device is inserted into a zif (zero-insertion-force) opening on a socket; and

pressing a compression mount lead on the socket against the contact pad of the circuit board.

16. The method of claim 15, further including the step of:

5 coupling the pin to the compression mount lead after the pin is inserted into the zif opening.

17. The method of claim 16, further including the step of:

10 pressing forking leads against the pin within the zif opening such that the pin is coupled to the compression mount lead via the forking leads.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein top portions of the forking leads contact a top portion of the pin toward the IC device to minimize an electrical path length between the IC device and the circuit board.

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19. The method of claim 15, wherein the compression mount lead is comprised of a pogo spring.

20. The method of claim 15, wherein the compression mount lead is comprised

20 of a J-bend lead.

21. The method of claim 15, further including the step of:

mounting the socket onto the circuit board such that the compression mount lead presses against the contact pad.

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22. The method of claim 15, further including the step of:

asserting substantially zero force on the body of the IC device when the pin is coupled to the contact pad.

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23. The method of claim 15, further including the step of:

mounting a back plate to a back-side of the circuit board when the socket is

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mounted to a front-side of the circuit board.

24. The method of claim 15, wherein the socket and the circuit board are part of a test system for testing the IC device.

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25. The method of claim 15, wherein the socket and the circuit board are parts for an OEM (original equipment manufacturer) machine.